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ASSOCIATED PRESS

23 May 1982

ASPIN-SOVIET MILITARY

FOR RELEASE AT 6:30 P.M. EDT

BY BARTON REPPERT

WASHINGTON (AP) -- THE CIA HAS INCREASED ITS ESTIMATE OF SOVIET MILITARY MANPOWER BY 1 MILLION MEN TO A NEW TOTAL OF 5.0 MILLION, REP. LES ASPIN, D-WIS., SAID SUNDAY.

THE ENTIRE BOOST, HOWEVER, REFLECTS AN IMPROVED ESTIMATE OF SOVIET NON-COMBAT TROOPS ASSIGNED TO CONSTRUCTION, CIVIL DEFENSE AND INTERNAL SECURITY RATHER THAN AN INCREASE IN FIGHTING MANPOWER, ASPIN SAID.

"THE LARGER ESTIMATE REPRESENTS NO INCREASE IN SOVIET NUMERICAL STRENGTH AND NO INCREASE IN THE CIA'S ESTIMATE OF WHAT IT REFERS TO AS THE 'NATIONAL SECURITY FORCE,' MANPOWER IN THE COMBAT SERVICES IS STILL ESTIMATED AT 4.3 MILLION," HE SAID.

ASPIN SAID THE CIA'S CHANGED ESTIMATE OF SOVIET MILITARY PERSONNEL WAS REMINISCENT OF THE AGENCY'S 1976 MOVE TO INCREASE THE ESTIMATE OF SOVIET DEFENSE SPENDING FROM 6-8 PERCENT OF GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT UP TO 11-13 PERCENT OF SOVIET GNP.

"SOME PEOPLE ARE GOING TO DISTORT THE NEW ESTIMATE TO MAKE THE PUBLIC THINK THE SOVIETS ARE STRONGER, WHEN REALLY THEY HAVE NO ADDITIONAL MILITARY CAPABILITY AND ALL THE NEWLY DISCOVERED TROOPS ARE DOING THE SAME STUFF WE THOUGHT THEY WERE DOING WITH FEWER PEOPLE," HE SAID.

CIA SPOKESMAN DALE PETERSON SAID THE AGENCY WOULD HAVE NO COMMENT UNTIL IT HAD BEEN ABLE TO STUDY ASPIN'S STATEMENT.

ASPIN, A MEMBER OF THE HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE AND A FREQUENT PENTAGON CRITIC, SAID THE CIA'S "DISCOVERY" OF THE ADDITIONAL MILLION TROOPS "DOESN'T RAISE ANY THREAT TO US."

"IN FACT, IT UNDERSCORES HOW INEFFICIENT THE SOVIETS ARE -- HOW THE RUSSIAN FORCES GET LESS KILL FOR THE MANEY," HE SAID.

ACCORDING TO ASPIN, THE CIA'S 1979 ESTIMATE PUTTING TOTAL SOVIET MILITARY MANPOWER AT 4.0 MILLION COUNTED 500,000 TROOPS AS NON-COMBAT FORCES.

THE NEW FIGURE, HE SAID, ESTIMATES SUCH SUPPORT AND CIVILIAN FORCES AT 4.5 MILLION -- 950,000 CONSTRUCTION AND RAILROAD TROOPS, 400,000 CIVIL DEFENSE TROOPS AND 450,000 INTERNAL SECURITY TROOPS.

THE REVISED SOVIET MILITARY TOTAL GREATLY OUTNUMBERS AMERICA'S 2.1 MILLION UNIFORMED MILITARY PERSONNEL, BUT ASPIN NOTED THAT "UNDER THE ALL-VOLUNTEER FORCE, THE U.S. ARMED FORCES HAVE BEGUN LEARNING TO ECONOMIZE ON UNIFORMED MANPOWER. NON-MILITARY JOBS HAVE BEEN HANDED OVER TO CIVILIANS."

"THE SOVIETS STILL HAVE CONSCRIPTION AND PAY THEIR RECRUITS 3.00 RUBLES (ABOUT $4) A MONTH," HE SAID. "THEY CAN AFFORD TO BE PROFLIGATE WITH MANPOWER WHILE THE U.S. MILITARY CANNOT."

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